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SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ESTONIA AND LATVIA

Letter dated 18 November 1993 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Latvia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the text of a letter dated 25 October 1993 from the Foreign Minister of Latvia addressed to the Foreign Ministers of the States Members of the United Nations on General Assembly agenda item 115 entitled "Situation of human rights in Estonia and Latvia" (see annex). In this connection, I should like to refer you to the "Summary of the report on a fact-finding mission to Latvia",* prepared by the present Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahima Fall.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 115 of the agenda of the forty-eighth session.

(Signed) Aivars BAUMANIS
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Latvia to the
United Nations

* For the text of this summary, see document A/47/748, annex.

Annex

Letter dated 25 October 1993 from the Foreign Minister of Latvia addressed to the Foreign Ministers of the States Members of the United Nations on General Assembly agenda item 115 entitled "Situation of human rights in Estonia and Latvia"

I have the honour to address you regarding the state of human rights in Latvia. Since the re-establishment of the independence of Latvia in August 1991, following a half-century of occupation by the former Soviet Union, much has been done to restore the rule of law to Latvia and to promote respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its residents.

In this connection, I should like to refer you to the "Summary of the report on a fact-finding mission to Latvia", prepared by the present United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, and endorsed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In particular, I should like to quote you one of the report's conclusions, which addresses the situation in Latvia with respect to its Russian-speaking population:

> "The information received and examined by the Mission does not reveal gross and systematic violations of human rights in Latvia. Individual violations which have been reported are limited and not related to discriminatory policy as such and they should and can be remedied at the appropriate level. On the positive side, it should be emphasized that no instances of violence, no mass dismissals from employment, exclusion from educational establishments, evictions from apartments, or expulsions were reported." a/

I have brought the matter of the state of human rights in Latvia to your attention because it is to be addressed during the present session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, under the agenda item entitled "Situation of human rights in Estonia and Latvia". This item was included in the agenda of the General Assembly on a request by the Russian Federation in November 1992, shortly before the release of the United Nations fact-finding mission's report on Latvia.

The necessity for the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the General Assembly was never established and - in any case - the conclusions found in the United Nations fact-finding mission's report on Latvia make the continuation of this item on the agenda unnecessary.

Discontinuation of this agenda item would conform with the conclusion endorsed by the Secretary-General that human rights are not being violated in Latvia.

Moreover, discontinuation of this agenda item would assist the efforts of the General Assembly to rationalize its agenda and allocate its resources towards the solution of actual and concrete problems.

I respectfully request your understanding and support for discontinuation of the above-mentioned agenda item during the present session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Notes

a/ A/47/748, annex, para. 23.